

# HARMONY FIRE DISTRICT

194 Putnam Pike  
Glocester, R.I. 02814

The regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was held at the Harmony Fire Station on **Thursday, September 18, 2014.**

Present: Chief Stuart Pearson; Treasurer – Sandra Owens;  
Board Members – Raymond Fogarty, Jr., George Kain & James Richards;  
Attorney – Fred Mason, Jr.

Absent: Moderator – Milton Huston – excused;  
Board Member – Louise Michaels – excused;  
Tax Collector/Clerk – Kimberly Barber – excused;  
Association Representative – William Vota, President – excused

**I. – Meeting Called to Order:** Ray stood in for Moderator Huston during his absence. The meeting was called to order at **7:00 pm** by Acting Moderator Fogarty.

**II. – Approval of the minutes from the August 21<sup>st</sup> meeting:**

Moderator Fogarty asked the board if there were any discrepancies to note on the minutes from the August 21<sup>st</sup> monthly meeting. He noted that they had been e-mailed to the board on 9/6/14 for review. If there are no corrections, he would like to call for a motion to accept them.

Jim made a motion to accept the minutes from both the August 21<sup>st</sup> monthly meeting. George seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**III. – Review of Bills:**

A check register of bills paid since the last meeting until today's date was provided to all board members in their folder. Moderator Fogarty asked if there were any comments or questions on these expenses. Sandy noted that the check for \$205,000 to pay for the new apparatus was included. Also, there was a large check to pay the annual insurance premium to VFIS. The Moderator stated that this is an informational report only and no vote is necessary.

*Note: The battery in the digital recorder died at this point in the meeting. Therefore there is an unrecorded portion of the meeting that is not transcribed verbatim.*

**IV. – Treasurer's Report:**

Beginning balance July 1<sup>st</sup> \$442,694.53 and ending balance July 31<sup>st</sup> \$407,096.02.

*Note: Recording started again here.*

Some discussion took place about the new state auditing requirements for fire districts. Sandy presented a letter she had received from the RI Auditor General's office for the boards review. Sandy stated that we have always traditionally done an Audit, though it is not required in our Charter, so that will not be a big difference for us. The states guidelines will just change how we compile our information, adding a little bit of work at Kim's end.

Sandy asked for the board's guidance on how to reply to correspondence from the state. The board agreed that she should reply that we intend to comply and are actively working with our Auditor. The board asked Attorney Mason to look at the legislation and Sandy gave copies to the board members also.

Ray asked Sandy to invite our Auditor, Geoff Malo, to attend the October meeting and we should start at 6:30 pm instead of 7:00 pm.

Further discussion took place over the "tier classification" established by the state for reporting requirements.

Jim made a motion to accept the July Treasurer's report as presented. George seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

#### V. – Tax Collector's Report:

The Chief stated that there will not be a report due to the fact that Kim is on vacation this week. However he did want to note that while she is away, she also attended a tax collectors conference before going on vacation, she has been keeping up on required postings to the Secretary of State's website. George asked if she had a way to that? The Chief replied that she had brought her laptop with her to use at WiFi hot spots. Also the Chief stated that she had left notes to report that she had been working on the credit card payment process for tax bill before she left and she had commented that it was going to be a very easy process. Sandy commented that there would be no cost to the district, any percentage surcharge would go to the tax payers. Otherwise she would not approve getting it. The Chief added that she had also left a note that it would be compatible with her Vision tax software. He also wanted to note that he has noticed a lot of other fire districts in the area have also started accepting credit cards .

The Chief said any further items for her report would be tabled until next month's meeting.

#### VI. – Chief's Report:

The Chief started by asking the board if the crew list he is required to submit for their review each September according to our SOG's, could be held off for presentation until the October meeting. The board agreed.

The Chief then advised the board that he had been forwarded a letter from Steve Sette of the Gloucester Town Council. He was copying all fire districts for an upcoming meeting with a company regarding saving money on street lights. In the accompanying e-mail correspondence Kim had told him that according to our Charter, Harmony does not provide street lighting. George stated that we had specifically taken that out of our charter during the last review. Councilor Sette asked whom he should forward inquiries regarding street light issues in Harmony then? Ray stated that we should reply again that our fire district charter does not require us to provide street lighting. George said street lighting would be a town or state issue.

The new LifePak 15 that we obtained through the AFG grant has been put in service on our rescue. Ray asked what was the dollar amount of the AFG grant? The Chief replied about \$41,000. Ray asked was it just the Life Pak that we purchased? The Chief said it was the LifePak, a 5 year service plan, a training device and we still have about a \$7,000 balance to use. We would need to submit to AFG another project or item in writing and they would have to approve it. George asked if it would have to be a rescue related item? The Chief said it would

need to be within the parameters of the AFG program. For example LDH, large diameter hose. Some discussion followed about the LifePak and its functions.

The Chief wanted to say kudos to the crew on a job well done on a call last week. The call came in at 9:00 am on a weekday and when the EMT's arrived they found a woman in her early 60's down from a heart attack. At that point she was blue and clinically dead. By the time they arrived at the hospital they had a blood pressure back on her. They did a fantastic job.

Another item that the Chief wanted to mention was Target Solutions. It will be going on-line with the crew to being training on it in October. What Target Solutions is, is an internet based program where everyone on the crew will have a log-in. They will be issued assignments that can be completed anytime, anywhere at their convenience, without attending a classroom session. It will also generate quizzes and track all of the associated training records. It will also be used for classroom portion of our upcoming EMT refresher.

George made a motion to accept the Chief's report. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **VII. – Harmony Fire Department & Improvement Association Report:**

There was no report to be presented due to Willy's absence.

However, the Chief did want to mention that the Gloucester Firefighters Scholarship Fund Steak Fry was coming up soon. It is scheduled for Saturday, October 4<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 pm until 8:00 pm at Watmough's Campground, \$15 per/person. Same time, same price as last year.

The Chief said any further items for this report would be tabled until next month's meeting.

#### **VIII. – Committee Reports:**

- a. Broadband Work Team – Milton Huston, Chair

This item was tabled until next month's meeting due to Milton's absence.

- b. Apparatus Review Work Team – Jim Richards, Chair

**Work Team: Jim, George, Chief, Deputy Chief Segee & Capt. John Falco**

The Moderator stated that the new Squad 2 is here. He wanted to thank the work team for all of their hard work on behalf of the board. George mentioned that the crew is going to be drilling with the new foam system on the truck this coming Monday night if anyone was interested in coming to watch. Jim also mentioned that we had received free air bags as compensation for the delay in delivery. He asked the Chief to elaborate further on this. The Chief said that we had purchased a set of air bags many, many years ago that needed to be tested before they were put into service on the new truck. When they were tested they were condemned. The vendor was aware of this and as compensation for the delay and a few other small items that were not done to our satisfaction, they gave us a new set, including hoses and a regulator for free. The Chief said that the committee researched the cost and these items are valued at about \$6,000. Jim said as a committee, they were satisfied with this arrangement. George stated that our concessions were valued at much less of a cost.

- c. Property Review Work Team – George Kain & Louise Michaels, Co-Chairs

Ray said that Tuesday he is meeting with the RI Foundation. He has gotten permission from the head to submit a one page general inquiry for funding. So a letter needs to be drafted to Neil Steinberg and forwarded to Ray before Tuesday. The RI Foundation manages nearly a billion dollars worth of funds now and they are willing to consider us because of the fact that we do regional training here. If the request were to come from a single department it wouldn't even be considered at all. They are trying to encourage cooperation amongst many different locales to do things on scale. In the letter it should be stressed that the purpose of purchasing the property is to increase our regional training programs and ensure safety with parking, etc. Ray said he could not find any other options for funding programs or donors within the community. There just isn't anything available. George asked what should be listed in the letter for a dollar amount. Ray said that he thought the dollar amount we had discussed at previous meetings was \$200,000? Some discussion followed about the cost of purchasing the property and the expense of the needed improvements for parking, etc. The board agreed that the dollar amount to list should be \$200,000.

#### **IX. – Old Business:**

a. Access to Public Records Act (APRA) Certification

Ray asked the Chief what this topic was about. The Chief replied that Kim is certified under the Access to Public Records Act and what we had discussed at our last meeting was getting someone else certified. Sandy had mentioned that she may be able to do this. The certification can be done on-line and the Chief will confirm that it has been done. We need to have at least 2 people certified. There was no further discussion on this topic since Kim was not available.

b. Mobile Home Legislation

The Chief explained that this was a law that the Town had put through. Ray asked how many trailers do we actually have in Harmony? No one really knew. George said he knew we had some up at Watmough's. He knew it was discussed at a town council meeting to have all 3 fire districts come on board with this legislation with them as a joint effort. He didn't think it was a bad idea. There was no further discussion on this topic since Kim was not available.

#### **X. – New Business:**

Ray asked if we could send a letter to the town to request a status update on Route 44 in Harmony. The letter should be cc: to the Glocester Public Safety Commission and our local elected officials. It should include the fact that the road conditions are continuing to deteriorate and that it has been well over 20 years since our last paving. It is getting bad out there again. Sandy said there is a huge hole at the end of Saw Mill Road again. Ray said he would like to have them put the information in writing, that way if it comes down to use having to have another big meeting, we have something to base it on. George said that they had stated to us in the past, that if it came down to it, they would help up put a push on the matter. Ray said yes, they had a big town meeting about the subject didn't they? The Chief said that at the last meeting of the Glocester Public Safety Commission he asked a member of the Glocester Town Council if he could tell him where we stood on the road work in Harmony. That individual told him that the project was back in the states hands in planning.

George stated that he had attended a Glocester Town Council meeting and the matter of tax exemptions for Brown University Professors was discussed. There was actually an article about

the subject in the newspaper also. Ray said that this subject was a non-issue, since the last Professor who was actually eligible to receive this exemption was back in 1940's or so. There is no one still alive who can get it.

**XI. – Public Input:** None

**XII. – Executive Session:**

George made a motion to go into Executive Session regarding personnel pursuant to *RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1)*. Jim seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board recessed for Executive Session at 8:05 pm and the regular meeting reconvened at 8:21 pm.

The Moderator noted that no votes had been taken while in Executive Session

George made a motion to seal the minutes of the Executive Session. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

**XIII. – Adjournment:**

Jim made a motion to adjourn the meeting. George seconded it. The motion carried unanimously. The August meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was adjourned at **8:23 pm**.

The next meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board  
is scheduled for **Thursday, 7:00 pm, October 16, 2014** at the Harmony Fire Station.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leah Camposeo  
Acting Clerk